LXXV. *Extract of a Letter to the Reverend* Thomas Birch, *D. D. Secretary to the Royal Society, from Mr.* Abraham Maſon, *of* Barbadoes, *relating to an extraordinary Agitation of the Sea there,* 31*ſt of* March 1761, *and an epidemical Diſorder in that Iſland.*

SIR, Barbadoes, May 30, 1761.

Read March 11, 1762. I Cannot omit giving you an account of a very extraordinary motion of the ſea, (I think it was the laſt day of March paſt) not unlike that, remarked here, on the dreadful day of calamity, which happened at Liſbon; with this difference, the laſt was not ſo ſudden as the former, in the flux and reflux; which ſufficiently ſhews, that the ſhock muſt have been greater, that occaſioned it, as it is moſt likely they proceeded from the ſame cauſe, (viz.) that of an earthquake, whereby ſome place, under the ſurface of the ſea, has been ſunk.

According to the beſt obſervations that could be made, the tide ebbed and flowed, in about eight minutes, between eighteen inches and two feet, and continued ſo three hours, regularly decreaſing till night, when it was no more obſervable.

It is very remarkable, that, ſince that time, the iſland has been in a very deplorable condition, having ſuffered under the ſevereſt colds, that have been ever known. The diſtreſs has been ſo general, that I may venture to aſſert, (with confidence) that nine-

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teen twentieths of the inhabitants of the iſland have felt the effects of the contagion; and to ſome it has been repeated ſeveral times. It has puzzled all the adepts in pharmacy, to find out the cauſe and cure of it. One favourable circumſtance has attended it, (viz.) few have died with it. The leeward iſlands have not eſcaped it, having raged there more violently, and more fatal. His Majeſty's ſhips have ſeverely felt the effects of it, ſome of them not being capable of keeping the ſeas, for want of men fit for ſervice.

This happening at a ſeaſon of the year remarkably the healthieſt, makes it the more ſurprizing; I had ſaid ſtrange, in compliance with the aptneſs of the expreſſion, only, I think, all natural cauſes are equally ſo, though thoſe are not alike ſtrangers to them, whoſe buſineſs it is to ſeek the acquaintance. Bleeding has been found of great efficacy, and uſed, both by way of prevention and cure, with great ſucceſs.

SIR,

Your moſt obedient

humble ſervant,

Abraham Maſon.